

5 NEXT STEPS

This chapter identifies general next steps that may be considered by the Program Sponsors for implementation to achieve the goals identified within the Program's Purpose and Need (see Chapter 1). More specific actions will be developed during the development of the Tier 1 Final EIS once a Preferred Alternative is identified.

The Tier 1 Final EIS will also identify phasing opportunities that may be available for the Preferred Alternative, which will be incrementally funded over a period of years as funding becomes available. The discussion of phasing opportunities will be further expanded in the Service Development Plan.

5.1. Tier 1 EIS Actions

After the public hearing phase of the Tier 1 Draft EIS is complete, the Program Sponsors will proceed with preparing a Tier 1 Final EIS, which will identify a Preferred Alternative. If appropriate, the Federal Railroad Administration will issue Record of Decision (ROD) on the Selected Program Alternative and associated programmatic-level mitigation. Additional service development planning details will be included in the Tier 1 Final EIS for the Preferred Alternative and in the ROD for the Selected Program Alternative. The Program Sponsors will also prepare a Service Development Plan (SDP); see Section 5.3 for the Selected Program Alternative. It is anticipated that once a ROD has been issued, the Program Sponsors will identify future sections of the Corridor that have independent utility.

5.2. Tier 2 Actions

A high-level discussion will be included in the ROD that will identify Tier 2 actions on a state-by-state basis for the Selected Program Alternative. At the conclusion of the Tier 2 Program, the partnering state DOTs and the FRA will have several Tier 2 NEPA clearance documents that include an analysis of environmental impacts, an analysis of independent utility for each Tier 2 action, alternatives, 30 percent preliminary designs (PE) and refined cost estimates for major infrastructure improvements such as bridges and other structures, substantial track and signal improvements outside of the existing right of way, as well as stations and maintenance facilities for the Selected Program Alternative.

5.3. Service Development Plan (SDP)

The SDP is an important document, prepared independent from the Tier 1 EIS, which provides a complete and concise transportation service plan addressing the economic, operating, and engineering elements of the Program. The SDP is the business plan that will enable the FRA and the Program Sponsors to advance the Program toward implementation of enhanced Chicago-Detroit/Pontiac higher-speed rail service. The SDP will be prepared for the Selected Program Alternative and will provide the details of the passenger transportation service including the following items:

- Station stops

- Operating plan and schedule
- Conceptual engineering and costs associated with required infrastructure improvements
- Train equipment
- Ridership and revenue forecasts
- Operating and maintenance activities and costs
- Station and maintenance facility improvements and costs
- Benefit-cost analysis
- Financial plan with a pro-forma statement of revenues and operating costs
- Multi-year capital program and implementation plan
- Phasing plan, which details incremental improvements in service reliability, operating speeds, travel times, and service frequencies.